

# Where It's @ Loudoun News from the Frontier of Innovation

Loudoun County Department of Economic Development

## Loudoun County's Strong Bond Ratings Reaffirmed

Following Loudoun County government officials' two-day trip to bond rating agencies in New York, the county's strong bond ratings from last year have all been reaffirmed. The continued high ratings will allow Loudoun to issue bonds at low interest rates.

On June 3 and 4, Loudoun County Board Chairman Scott York and County Administrator Kirby Bowers, along with Ben Mays, Paul Arnett, and DED Director Larry Rosenstrauch, met with **Moody's Investor Service, Standard and Poor's, and Fitch IBCA**. Their presentations to the agencies included information on new, expanding, and award-winning businesses in the county, the region's overall business base, and highlights of the county's diversifying economy.

Moody's reaffirmed its Aa1 rating, and Standard and Poor's and Fitch IBCA reaffirmed their AA+ ratings. The ratings reflected the agencies' opinions that Loudoun's economic outlook remains strong. Standard and Poor's report stated that its ratings reflect "a local economic base ... that continues to grow and diversify, high wealth and income levels, and a moderate and manageable debt burden ...". Moody's cited Loudoun's "good management to continue to balance rapid development with preservation of valuable rural characteristics." Fitch IBCA stated that it reaffirmed its AA+ ratings based on "the county's strong financial policies and performance, rapidly expanding and diversifying economy, and above-average wealth levels."

## Loudoun's SBDC Assists the County's Small Business Boom

### Loudoun's *Small Business*

**Development Center (SBDC)** is continuing to serve an increasing number of clients with each passing month.



Compared with last year, the SBDC is assisting 62% more clients, providing seminars for 61% more participants, and spending 24% more time counseling those starting up local small businesses.

Loudoun SBDC Director Caroline Mansi attributes the increase to the county's unprecedented growth:

"They want to be here because this is where they see the real growth in the Washington metro economy and they want to be involved in our business community at this exciting time. I am also seeing many who are laid off recently who are simply 'fed up' working for corporate America and want to be creative and in charge of their own destiny ... I am also seeing a trend with stay at home moms ... we have a lot of mothers who are highly educated, and experienced women who want to earn extra income and be professionally fulfilled at the same time. Many of them come to my Center looking to start their own home based businesses."

### Department's New Prospect Activity—June:

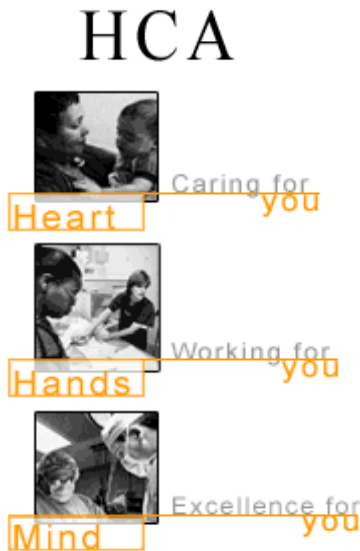
- ? Responded to 82 requests for general information
- ? Sent out 128 marketing packages
- ? Delivered 5 proposals and presentations
- ? Conducted 3 tours
- ? Worked with 7 new and 35 on-going prospects
- ? Distributed 57 Farm Fresh Product Guides

### Inside this issue:

Announcements and Expansions	2
Noteworthy	3
Department News	4
Construction Activity	4

## Announcements and Expansions

### New & Existing Business



- ? **HCA, Hospital Corporation of America**, announced plans to construct a new 180 bed hospital on a 57-acre site at the 42000 block of Broadlands Boulevard in Broadlands. If approved, this new hospital would replace the Northern Virginia Community Hospital in Arlington and the 100-bed Dominion Psychiatric Hospital in Falls Church. As part of the plan, these hospitals would remain open until the replacement hospital opens in 2005 or 2006. HCA has submitted a letter of intent to the Virginia Office of Health Facilities Regulation seeking a certificate of need to build the replacement facility. HCA, based out of Nashville, owns over 200 locally-managed hospitals across the country and oversees. The company's 2001 report stated that HCA strives to locate new and "replacement" hospital facilities in areas with above average population growth, in part to help meet pent-up demand for the growing medical needs of "baby boomers."
- ? **Sheila Johnson**, co-founder of Black Entertainment Television, has purchased the 349-acre Harriman

Tract in Middleburg, and plans are underway for its development. The current development plan, though still in the early stages, include a 40-room country inn, a public restaurant, spa, and an equestrian facility for 50 horses.

? **WorldCom**, following layoffs June 28, now has approximately 3,500 employees occupying 1.3 million square feet of space in Ashburn. To assist both former WorldCom employees and the job-seeking public, a July 26 job fair is being organized by the Virginia Employment Commission (VEC), Northern Virginia Community College (NVCC), and Representatives Frank Wolf and Tom Davis. The event will be held at the new NVCC Charles Waddell Building in Sterling from 8 to 11 am. Job information is also available from the VEC online at <http://www.vec.state.va.us>.

? **Orbital Sciences** turned a profit for the first time in four years during First Quarter 2002, thanks in part to the Dulles company's new \$900 million, 8-year contract with the Defense Department's Missile Defense Agency.

### AeroAstro



AeroAstro conducts space electronics fabrication and testing in its new clean room laboratory.

### New Business News

- ? **AeroAstro** held its grand opening June 18 at its new location at the Ashbrook Business Park. Supervisor Chuck Harris presented the company with an open door certificate, and those present, including DED's Larry Rosenstrauch, Robyn Bailey, and Pam Treadwell, enjoyed festivities complete with a site tour, barbecue, and bluegrass music. AeroAstro is a leading manufacturer of satellites, communications, and miniaturized technologies, and employs 50 at the Ashburn location. The company is currently working with Globalstar, a provider of global mobile satellite telecommunications services, to develop a new, very low cost simplex data modem for remote sensing and asset tracking via satellite. An initial demonstration of the new product is scheduled for late-summer 2002.

## Noteworthy

DED's Sean LaCroix recently prepared a summary report based on *Economy.com's June 20th Regional Outlook Presentation*. Among the highlights, LaCroix reported that while Maryland is in a worsening state of recession, Virginia is currently not in a recession, and is expected to experience strong employment growth relative to the rest of the U.S. in 2003. Additionally, while housing prices in many urban areas and the west coast are overpriced, the Washington Metro area housing rates are currently in balance relative to income growth.

As part of the Loudoun Board of Supervisors' five-part series to receive public input on specific topics arising from changes to the Zoning Ordinance, Facilities Standards Manual (FSM) and Land Subdivision Development Ordinance, the *Suburban Zoning Focus Group* sessions were held June 6 and June 12. Bob Gordon represented the EDC at the sessions, while ten other volunteers from Loudoun's business and residential community also took part. A summary of the comments from the Suburban focus group, as well as the Overlay Districts, Rural Uses, Conservation Design, and Towns/JLMA meetings are posted online at <http://www.loudoun.gov/compplan/remap.htm>.

The Greater Washington Initiative reported the results of *Hispanic Business Magazine's June 2002 Hispanic Business 500* list. The list ranks the 500 U.S. Hispanic-owned companies with the highest revenue for 2001. According to the Initiative, among the ten most populous metro regions in the United States, the Greater Washington region has the second largest number of Hispanic-owned businesses, second only to Los Angeles. Additionally, the Business 500 list ranks Virginia fourth in terms of the total number of Hispanic-owned businesses (20) and related revenue (\$522.78 million). Local award-winning company *The Cube Corporation* received further merit from the magazine by being ranked 80th in the national list. Last year the Sterling-based facilities operations and maintenance company was ranked 105th on the list, and won the magazine's Entrepreneur of the Year award.

## Economy.com™

Economy.com, Inc. is a leading provider of economic, financial, and industry research for business organizations, governments, and professional investors worldwide.



For more than 21 years, **HISPANIC BUSINESS®** magazine has been a market leader at delivering the Hispanic market.

*Co-Star's First Quarter 2002* national commercial real estate market reports are out. According to Co-Star analysts, the first quarter results demonstrate the "time lag effect" that occurred when many new projects were started during the boom in 2000, only to be delivered now when there is already a "glut of available space." In the Washington, D.C. area, Co-Star reports that while the District is "securing its place among the best investment markets in the country," with an office vacancy rate of less than 10%, the Northern Virginia area is "clearly still in a downspin from last year's technology bust." Of the 36 metropolitan areas profiled, the Washington area had the fifth-lowest office vacancy rate, at 11.9%, for First Quarter 2002. The area's 11.0% industrial/flex vacancy rate ranked it 21st of the 36 markets profiled. Ranking last (36th) in the reports were Dallas/Ft. Worth, with a 20.7% office vacancy rate, and Raleigh/Durham, with a 21.4% industrial/flex vacancy rate. New York City has the lowest office vacancy rate (9.2%) and Los Angeles the lowest industrial/flex rate (4.7%).



National office and industrial market reports for First Quarter 2002 are available online from Co-Star at [www.costar.com](http://www.costar.com).

## Loudoun County Department of Economic Development

1 Harrison Street, SE, 5th Floor  
P.O. Box 7000  
Leesburg, Virginia 20177  
Phone: 703-777-0426  
Toll Free: 1-800-loudoun  
Fax: 703-771-5363

## Department News

DED's newest staff member, **Sean LaCroix**, was given a surprise wedding shower June 26. Sean and his new wife Kim married on June 29 and are honeymooning in Anguilla. Congratulations and welcome to the family Sean!



Six DED staff members met with the **Virginia Economic Development Partnership (VEDP)** in Richmond and gave a presentation and overview of Loudoun County. Team leaders and researchers from VEDP will be coming to Loudoun in July for follow-up meetings and a tour.

Robyn Bailey attended the George Mason University **Networked Economy Summit** at Reston Town Center. The event included information on business security, and was highlighted by a speech from former New York Mayor Rudy Giuliani.

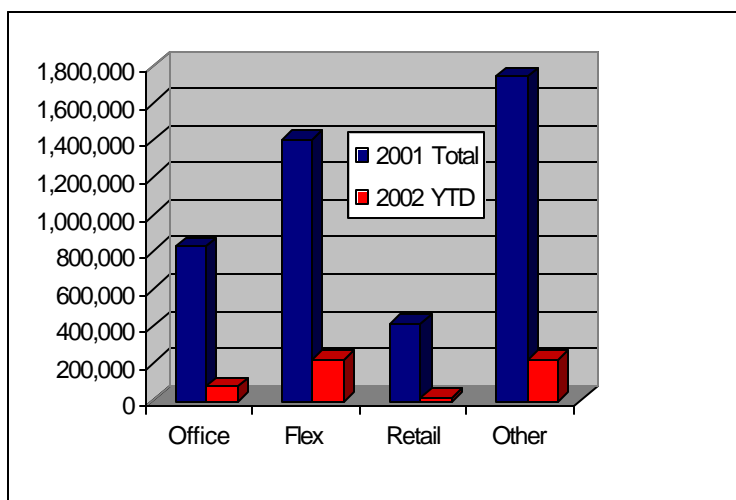
VISIT US ON THE WEB AT:  
[WWW.LOUDOUN.GOV/BUSINESS](http://WWW.LOUDOUN.GOV/BUSINESS)

The Loudoun County Planning Commission's public hearing on the proposed **Moorefield Station** development was held June 19. The Department of Economic Development was asked a series of questions at the hearing which will be addressed at the next session July 10.

## Construction Activity

In May 2002, Loudoun County permitted 85,803 square feet of nonresidential construction. The May value of new buildings (\$2,471,962) and alterations (\$3,442,433) is over \$5.9 million.

- ? Office — 72,430 SF in May and 0 SF in April
- ? Flex/Industrial — 0 SF in May and 0 SF in April
- ? Retail — 0 SF in May and 0 SF in April
- ? Other — 13,383 SF in May and 30,834 in April
- ? Taxable — 83,828 SF in May and 30,834 SF in April
- ? Route 28 — 4,249 SF in May and 0 SF in April



Nonresidential Construction — Square Feet Permitted  
2001 Total and January-May 2002